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Carter and the CIA

It is not surprising that George Bush, a former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and now a Republican candidate for the presidential nomination next year, would declare that the nation must uphold its treaty obligations and improve its intelligence operations.

Nor was it surprising that he would tell his Rochester Chamber of Commerce dinner audience the other night, "We can't afford the luxury of tearing down the CIA and the FBI any more."

Bush is absolutely right and it is unfortunate that the incumbent president doesn't feel the same way. Jimmy Carter, meeting with a group of broadcasters in Washington not long ago, let loose with one of his usual abusive references to the

CIA when he underscored "Vietnam, Watergate and CIA violations of the law" while he was lashing out against his predecessors in office.

In recent years, Carter, his old Navy buddy, Adm. Stansfield Turner, now CIA director, and certain members of Congress, have been more than active in emasculating the the CIA and other of the federal intelligence agencies.

And if Carter's electioneering rhetoric is going to continue tearing down the CIA, the FBI, the National Security Agency and other such organizations, it can be taken as an indication that if he regains the presidency in 1980, the nation's intelligence apparatus will be more completely dismantled.